

SENATE.....

Mass: State infirmary,
Tewksbury

.....No. 13.

FIRST REPORT

OF THE

INSPECTORS

OF THE

STATE ALMSHOUSE,

AT TEWKSBURY.

DECEMBER, 1854.

BOSTON:

WILLIAM WHITE, PRINTER TO THE STATE.

1855.

361 M 3
5799 v
1854-66

A

INSPECTORS' REPORT.

To His Excellency the Governor and the Hon. Council:—

In obedience to the requirements of the 10th section of chapter 252 of the Acts of 1852, the undersigned, Inspectors of the State Almshouse, Tewksbury, beg leave respectfully to submit to your Excellency and the Hon. Council their Annual Report:—

In accordance with a proclamation previously made by His Excellency the Governor, the house was opened for the reception of paupers on the first day of May, 1854. The building and its surroundings, however, were still in a somewhat unfinished state. The yard was unenclosed, rendering the safe-keeping of the inmates difficult, if not impossible. The house had been furnished by the Commissioners, under whose supervision it was erected, with accommodations for five hundred persons only. At the end of the first week of its opening six hundred and sixty-eight had been admitted; and, by the 20th of May, the number had reached nearly eight hundred. A corresponding and heavy outlay for beds, bedding and other necessities, was, of course, rendered unavoidable. The expenses at this period were also increased by the necessity that existed for furnishing an additional supply of water. The well constructed by the Commissioners, for the use of the house, utterly failed to supply the amount of water required, and it became necessary to deepen it, and also to dig two others on the premises.

On the 23d of May, two hundred of the paupers were transferred to the State Almshouse in Bridgewater, under the Act of 1853; and on the 23d of June, the number having again reached seven hundred and seventy-five, two hundred and ten were sent to that in Monson. Since then, to wit, on the 14th of November, seventy-nine were transferred to Bridgewater, and on the next day eighty to Monson—making a total of five hundred and sixty-nine sent from Tewksbury to the other establishments.

The whole number of paupers admitted to the house, to December 1, amounts to two thousand one hundred and ninety-three, and they have been received from the following cities and towns, viz.:—

From Boston,	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,383
“ Lowell,	.	.	.	.	.	.	243
“ Lawrence,	.	.	.	.	.	.	73
“ Charlestown,	.	.	.	.	.	.	68
“ Salem,	.	.	.	.	.	.	65
“ Cambridge,	.	.	.	.	.	.	63
“ Lynn,	.	.	.	.	.	.	31
“ Newburyport,	.	.	.	.	.	.	21
“ Danvers,	.	.	.	.	.	.	19
“ Tewksbury,	.	.	.	.	.	.	18
“ Chelsea,	.	.	.	.	.	.	17
“ Haverhill,	.	.	.	.	.	.	13
“ Waltham,	.	.	.	.	.	.	11
“ Sudbury,	.	.	.	.	.	.	9
“ Holliston, Shirley, each 9,	.	.	.	.	.	.	18
“ Watertown,	.	.	.	.	.	.	7
“ Somerville,	.	.	.	.	.	.	6
“ Winchester,	.	.	.	.	.	.	5
“ Manchester, Andover, Framingham, each 4,	.	.	.	.	.	.	12
“ Natick, Newton, Marlboro', Malden, Hopkinton, West Cambridge, Brighton, Chelmsford, each 3,	.	.	.	.	.	.	24
“ Concord, Sudbury, Beverly, Insane Hospital, Taunton, each 2,	.	.	.	.	.	.	8

From Dracut, South Reading, Gloucester, Westford, Melrose, Billerica, Read- ing, Stoneham, Stowe, each 1, .	9
Transient,	18
Born in the house,	55
Total,	<u>2,193</u>

Of the foregoing number, there were born in

Ireland,	847
Massachusetts, mostly of foreign parents, .	600
England,	80
Nova Scotia,	41
New Brunswick,	31
Scotland,	27
Germany,	17
Newfoundland and Canada, in each 11, .	22
France,	7
Italy,	3
Sweden, Calcutta, St. Domingo, in each 2, .	6
Africa, Russia, Wales, West Indies, Zanzi- bar, Sandwich Islands, Hungary, Greece, Denmark, in each 1,	9
Maine,	33
New York,	23
New Hampshire,	18
Vermont,	9
Virginia,	6
Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, in each 4,	12
Maryland,	3
Ohio, North Carolina, Michigan, in each 2, .	6
Delaware, South Carolina, District of Co- lumbia, in each 1,	3
Unknown,	390

Of the above number, 112 came into the Commonwealth during the year 1854. Average number in the house, 705. Of the 2,193 admissions, 655 were men, 568 women, 583 boys, and 387 girls.

EXPENDITURES.

The account current of Isaac H. Meserve, Superintendent, with the Commonwealth, is herewith presented, (marked A,) and exhibits an account of the expenditures from the opening of the house to December 1. The Legislature, by their Act, chap. 189, of the year 1854, appropriated five thousand four hundred dollars for purchase of farming stock, implements, vehicles, and other necessary articles. The large outlay already alluded to, rendered unavoidable by the admission of so many more than were provided for when the Institution came into the hands of the Inspectors, drew so heavily upon this appropriation that it was soon exhausted; and many expenditures that should have been charged to it are shown, in the Superintendent's account, as among the current expenses of the house. The whole amount, as per the Superintendent's account, and which has been duly audited, and found correct, and properly vouched, is \$28,043.15.

From this sum we deduct, as not being among the ordinary expenses of the house, the following amounts:—

For beds, bedding, furniture, lumber, digging wells, stationery, such as blank books for the office, printing, &c.,	\$3,193 57	
Transportation of paupers to other State Almhouses,	591 84	
Also, West India goods and coal on hand December 1,	1,702 00	
Hay, straw, and carrots, do.,	336 00	
Dry goods, beds and bedding, do.,	2,151 29	
	<hr/>	\$8,694 70
Which, deducted from the gross amount, leaves		\$19,348 45
To this should be added the following:—		
Outstanding bills against the house,	\$462 23	
Salaries of officers two-thirds of a quarter,	564 00	
	<hr/>	1,026 23
Leaving as the amount of current expenses,		\$20,374 68

This sum, divided by 705, the average number in the house, shows \$28.90, within a very small fraction, as the cost of support of an individual for seven months, or 214 days, or ninety-four cents five mills per week. This estimate does not, as will be seen, include the interest on the Almshouse establishment, which, in reality, is a part of the current expense.

Assuming the cost of the house to be \$75,000, which we think is nearly correct, and reckoning the interest on that amount, it will show the weekly cost for the support of an individual to be \$1.05.

The stock of cattle and hogs on hand is very considerably enhanced in value since its purchase in May. Five hundred loads of good manure, it is estimated, have been made, and between five and six hundred loads of meadow mud taken out of the ground. Suitable avenues, leading from the road to the house, have been graded, and trees set out upon them. Five acres of unreclaimed land, filled with stumps and stones, have been ploughed and dug over, and a great quantity of stone taken out, suitable for walls and other purposes. This land, when thoroughly reclaimed, will be the most productive on the farm. The labor has all been performed by the inmates. The lateness of the season when operations were commenced, the impoverished condition of the soil, and the severe drought of the summer combined to render our harvest of hardly appreciable value.

In conducting the establishment, the officials required to fill the various departments are, a Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent; Matron and Assistant Matron; farmer; a head cook; watchman; a man to take charge of the barn, and to remove paupers upon their arrival at the depot; one female nurse; two female teachers; an overseer of the sewing-room; a female cook in the Superintendent's apartment; a physician; and a chaplain.

In this connection, it gives us great pleasure to bear our testimony to the ability, zeal and fidelity with which the Superintendent and Matron have discharged their onerous and responsible duties. While perfect order and discipline have been enforced throughout every department of the establishment, the inmates have been treated with kindness and due consideration, and no cases of severe or unjustifiable punish-

ment have occurred. The Assistant Superintendent and the Assistant Matron have also been faithful and indefatigable in their labors; and among the present subordinate *employees* no instances of unfaithfulness have been noted, but all seem to have been animated by a commendable desire to do their whole duty.

School.—The school connected with the house has been under the charge of Mrs. Emeline Pillsbury, assisted by Miss Sarah Weymouth. The number of pupils has ranged from eighty-six to one hundred and fifty-three. The elementary branches only have been taught. The teachers have been faithful in their instructions within the school, and have had, also, a considerate care and oversight of the children out of school hours.

Hospital.—We herewith present the report of the Physician of the house, Jonathan Brown, M. D., (marked B,) which contains all the important statistics that relate to the Hospital. Two serious and fatal diseases have visited our establishment during the past season—the cholera, in May and June; and in October there appeared among the children an endemic gangrenous sore mouth, of singular virulence and fatality. Large numbers of persons are admitted into the house in the advanced stages of consumption and other diseases, and also many exhausted, miserable children, apparently hitherto uncared for and ill treated. These causes combined to swell the mortality to its apparently large amount. Dr. Brown has faithfully devoted his time and energies to his responsible duties, and has the entire confidence of the Inspectors and Superintendent.

Religious and Moral Instruction.—Rev. Jacob Coggin, recently deceased, performed the duties of chaplain from the opening of the house till a short time previous to his death. He preached once on each Lord's day, and gathered the children into a Sunday school. His well-known kind and urbane manner, strongly attached to him the inmates of the house, who listened reverently to his pious teachings.

In concluding this brief report, the undersigned deem it not

obtrusive to offer a few suggestions, the result of their experience in managing the affairs of the Institution.

1. The inequality in numbers in the three establishments, and the great preponderance in favor of the Tewksbury house, are apparent at a glance. It has already been stated that five hundred and sixty-nine have been removed from this Institution and divided between the other two, and this at an expense of nearly \$600. To avoid this expense, as well as the great inconveniences attending the removal of such large numbers of persons, is certainly desirable. The Legislature, in its wisdom, will choose between a reconstruction of the pauper districts, or giving authority to cities and towns to send their State paupers into other districts when the house in their own is full.

2. The subject of warming the building is one of prime importance, and demands a most thorough and scientific investigation. It is important on two grounds—*economy* and *safety*. The building is now warmed by eight furnaces, and in extremely cold weather these means have been found inadequate to the purpose, and several stoves have been added. It is a question deserving consideration, whether, in such an extensive building, warmth obtained by means of *steam* would not be cheaper and far more safe. In this connection, a small steam engine might be used to raise water into the tanks, placed in the attic of the building, and for many other mechanical purposes. This immense pile, constructed of wood, without the protection of even a single brick or stone partition throughout its whole extent, is peculiarly liable to conflagration. If a fire should break out within its walls in the nighttime, it is next to impossible that its hundreds of infirm old men and women, and young and helpless children, could escape unharmed. Motives of *humanity*, then, as well as safety and economy, dictate that every available precaution be taken against such a dire and fearful catastrophe.

3. The want of additional workshops is sensibly felt. Many kinds of in-door work might be advantageously carried on by the adult inmates and the older children, if suitable accommodations were provided for the same. The pecuniary receipts from such labor would, in the aggregate, amount to no inconsiderable sum; and, what is still of more vital importance, *employment* would thus be afforded to many who would otherwise

be idle. In such an establishment as the one under review there will always be many infirm men who are unequal to the labors of the field, and women too feeble to engage in the ordinary avocations of the household, who might still be well employed in the manner here indicated.

4. Some alterations in the internal arrangements of the house are, to say the least, very desirable, particularly the building of a cook-room, detached from the main body of the house, and yet connected with the dining-room by means of a covered passage way. The advantages of this arrangement would be a more healthful atmosphere throughout the house; the present cook-room could be converted into a convenient and needed ward for the old and infirm inmates, and an additional security against the calamity of fire be obtained.

All which is respectfully submitted.

ELISHA HUNTINGTON,	}	<i>Inspectors.</i>
STEPHEN MANSUN,		
DANL. HENCHMAN,		

STATE ALMSHOUSE,	}
Tewksbury, Dec. 29, 1854.	

SUPERINTENDENT'S ACCOUNT.

To cash paid salary of officers, . . .	2,041	32	August,	By cash received of State Treasurer, .	1,791	43
" cash paid for meat and fish, . . .	2,996	81	Sept.,	" "	4,290	64
" cash paid for hay and straw, . . .	963	44	October,	" "	5,553	86
" cash paid for wood, . . .	491	24	Nov.,	" "	4,041	81
" cash paid for coal, . . .	1,631	94				
" cash paid for flour and meal, . . .	4,939	04				
" cash paid for shoes, . . .	704	15				
" cash paid for potatoes and onions, . . .	661	52				
" cash paid for drugs and medicines, . . .	138	11				
" cash paid for milk, . . .	444	87				
" cash paid for freights and transportations on railroads, . . .	578	74				
" cash paid for cabbages, turnips and carrots, . . .	175	12				
" cash paid for sundry supplies, . . .	372	92				
" cash paid for improvements, furniture, digging wells, stationery, printing, &c., . . .	3,913	57				
	<u>\$28,043 15</u>				<u>\$28,043 15</u>	

ISAAC H. MESERVE, Superintendent.

STATE ALMSHOUSE, *Tewksbury, December 1, 1854.*

This certifies that we have examined the within account of Isaac H. Meserve with the Commonwealth, and find the same correctly cast and properly vouched.

ELISHA HUNTINGTON, }
STEPHEN MANSUR, } *Inspectors.*
DAN'L HENCHMAN, }

[B.]

PHYSICIAN'S REPORT.

To the Inspectors of the State Almshouse at Tewksbury :—

GENTLEMEN :—The following abstract of the Hospital Records, together with the tables of Births and Deaths, from May 1 to December 1, 1854, is respectfully submitted.

The whole number entered on the Hospital books, up to December 1, was 802. The greatest number under treatment at any one time, including sore eyes, &c., was 180.

Cholera prevailed as an epidemic from the 26th of June to the last of July. Of 44 cases 23 died.

Sore mouth also appeared as an epidemic in October, and continued, with its virulency somewhat abated, up to December 1. Of 50 cases of this disease, 13 have died.

It is a fact worthy of consideration, that these epidemics commenced among the children in the nursery chamber, directly over the cook, kitchen and wash-room ; this room is constantly exposed to the heat from the fires, the fumes from the hot food, and the steam from the washing process. I think that these causes, combined with the crowded state of the nursery, had much influence in exciting the epidemics above mentioned.

The great number of children in the house make the mortality of this class appear larger, in proportion to the adults, than usual.

Teething, hydrocephalus, scrofula, bowel complaints, infantile debility, and other diseases have caused the death of 78 under five years of age.

Consumption, as usual, has taken its "lion's share."

We have had but 1 case of smallpox or varioloid, 5 of ship

fever, and 28 cases of fever of the typhoid form. Recovery in every instance.

The number of children born, as will be seen by the tables, is 62. Of the 61 mothers, 3 have died in the puerperal state—1 from hemorrhage, and 2 from peritoneal inflammation or puerperal fever.

JONATHAN BROWN, *Physician.*

STATE ALMSHOUSE, TEWKSBURY, }
December 19, 1854. }

